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**STEVEN L. BESHEAR
GOVERNOR**

**NIKKI R. JACKSON
SECRETARY**

Dear Principals,

I am pleased to announce the 12th Annual Governor's Diversity Day is scheduled for **March 26, 2009**.  This day was previously set aside to raise diversity awareness and cultural competency among Kentucky's middle and high school students.  The event has traditionally taken the form of a full day conference in Frankfort; however, this year the Personnel Cabinet's Office of Diversity & Equality has developed a new and innovative approach.  This new format allows us to be inclusive of primary school-aged youth, thus even encouraging greater participation.

Conscientious of budget restraints across both state government and Kentucky's school systems, this years Governor's Diversity Day is designed to help you promote diversity while keeping costs at a minimum.  Instead of asking you to bring bus loads of students to Frankfort for a statewide assembly, we are asking you to take some time on March 26 to foster discussion of "The Importance of Diversity" within your institutions.  Your participation in this program could take the form of an assembly, a forum, an in-class discussion or whatever design best suits your situation.  The main goal of the Governor's Diversity Day is to get students thinking about and discussing the importance of diversity.

To assist with this endeavor, the Office of Diversity & Equality will provide your coordinator, via email, a Diversity Day Toolkit.  This toolkit will provide resources to help plan your customized diversity day event.  We recognize that for diversity education to be most effective, it has to be relevant to the students participating.  Therefore, we encourage you to take advantage of the Governor's Diversity Day to proactively address any diversity concerns you may have at your schools.

In the months leading up to the Governor's Diversity Day, the Office of Diversity & Equality will also be sponsoring a video contest.  The Governor's Diversity Day Video Project is a unique chance to foster dialogue on diversity among Kentucky's students.  Today's technological climate has altered the way information is presented to the Commonwealth's younger generations.  Video is the new effective medium for presenting information to a generation that is increasingly reliant on visual, as opposed to textual, expressions of ideas.  The visual representation of ideas could significantly increase students' comprehension of diversity issues. The planning stages of producing a video will encourage detailed discussions of the meaning of diversity among participants and advising faculty.  A video project may also illicit participation from students who would have no interest in participating in a traditional essay contest.

Student(s) can submit a 3-5 minute video, in accordance with guidelines provided by the Office of Diversity & Equality (see attached), to be reviewed by a Governor's Diversity Day Video Project Selection Committee. A special Finalists Panel, composed of representatives from various state government agencies, will then judge the ten finalists (from each level). Governor Beshear will introduce the three winning videos in a recorded message to students on Diversity Day.

We are currently working to partner with Kentucky Educational Television to showcase the ten finalists later in the year.

If you have any questions regarding the Governor's Diversity Day program or video project, or would like any future information to go directly to an appointed faculty/staff member, please contact the program's coordinator, Clinton Morris at (502) 564-8000 or Clinton.Morris@ky.gov.

We are confident that with your help we can make the 12th Annual Governor's Diversity Day a huge success!

Thank you for your time. We look forward to working with you to educate our children on diversity and equality.

Sincerely,


Michelé E. Lawlis
Executive Director


Enclosure: Governor's Diversity Day Video Project Forms